Hartland
February 1900.

copy of annual report

To the Bideford Rural District Council

Mr. Chairman & Gentlemen,

I beg to present to you my report upon the health of the district during the year 1899. It will be observed that the vital statistics refer to a smaller population than last year's report as West Putford, with a population of 233, having been transferred to the Holsworthy Union, has to be left out of account.

There has been a great deal of epidemic sickness during the year, chiefly Influenza and Whooping cough.

The climatic conditions have not been favourable to good health: a long very wet winter having been followed by an exceedingly dry summer. These things combined have all tended to an increase in the death rate, and the infant mortality especially is very high as will be seen by reference to the statistics further on in the report.

It is very satisfactory however

to note that there has been a further decline this year in the number of infectious diseases notified, not one case coming from the Village of Woolsery, which has given so much trouble in times past.

Sickness & General Health

January. Influenza was prevalent in the district. Five notifications were received: — Diptheria 2. Puerperal Fever 1. Scarlet Fever 1. Erysipelas 1.

February. Influenza was less prevalent. Two notifications were received: — Diptheria 1. Puerperal Fever 1.

March. April & May. Whooping-cough was very prevalent in Buckland Brewer, in the Parkham district, in consequence of which the Board school was closed from April 19th to May 22nd. Two notifications were received: — Facial erysipelas 1. Scarlet Fever 1.

June, July & August. General health was very good except for some sickness & diarrhoea — especially amongst children, owing to a spell of very hot weather. One notification of Erysipelas was received in July.

In September the Board school at Woolsery was closed from

Sickness & General Health continued

September 13th to Sept. 25th on account of whooping cough. Summer diarrhoea was prevalent. Five notifications were received:— Erysipelas 4. Scarlet Fever 1.

In October the general health was very good.

In November Influenza began to be again prevalent, & Whooping cough began to appear in Hartland. Two notifications were received:— Scarlet Fever 1. Erysipelas 1.

In December Influenza was extremely prevalent all over the district, and Whooping cough in Hartland Parish.

Owing to the Influenza the Board School at Monkleigh was closed from Dec: 4th to Dec: 11th. Two notifications were received:— Puerperal Fever 1. Scarlet Fever 1.

Notifications of Infectious Diseases

Twenty notifications have been received, the cases being scattered over the whole of the district. This is a great improvement on the two preceeding years as the following table shows:—

	1897	1898	1899
No: of Infectious cases notified	43	31	20.

Notifications of Infectious diseases continued

The diseases notified were as under:—
Scarlet Fever 5. Diptheria 3.
Puerperal Fever 3. Erysipelas 9.

Two of these cases proved fatal—One of Scarlet Fever & one of Puerperal Fever. Of the Scarlet Fever two of the cases were imported into the district.
Of the Puerperal Fever in one case the sanitary surroundings were found to be very bad. In another case the patient had been nursing a child suffering from Scarlet Fever. The third case could not be accounted for.

Non-notifiable Infectious Diseases

Whooping cough has been more or less epidemic in the district all the year but chiefly in Buckland Brewer, Woolsery & Bucks Mills— In November a strong easterly wind arose, which lasted for six weeks, and shortly after it set in Whooping cough broke out in the Parish of Hartland, the most westerly part of the district, gradually increasing in intensity until hardly a family seemed free.
Five deaths are directly attributed to this disease.
Influenza. Early in the year

Non-notifiable Infectious Diseases continued

Influenza made its appearance but was not very severe and soon died away. In the latter months of the year, in November & December, it again made its appearance, and was very general, proving especially dangerous to the feeble & aged.
Six deaths are attributed to this disease.
Diarrhoea - A very hot dry summer following an exceptionally wet winter, as in the past year, presents a very favourable opportunity for an outbreak of diarrhoea. Notwithstanding this, and although this complaint is responsible for three deaths in the district, there has not been so much as one might have been led to expect.

Summary of Sanitary work

The Sanitary Inspector, Mr. James Pennington, living as he does at Partcham, is very centrally situated for carrying on the work of the district, and is most zealous and efficient in the discharge of his duties.
The following is a summary of his work for the past year as shown by his books:—
164 visits to dwelling houses & premises
28 Dwelling houses & premises disinfected

Summary of Sanitary work continued

9 Drinking wells cleaned & protected.
16 notices for the removal of house refuse & other offensive matters injurious to public health.
11 notices to abate serious nuisances.
4 new privies built.
6 new drains constructed at cottages & farmyards.
5 old drains re-constructed.
4 samples of drinking water submitted to the M. O. H for analysis.
2 old closets re-constructed.
2 new wells sunk & pumps fixed.

There are in the district:—
24 Registered dairies.
14 Public schools.
14 Slaughter houses.
2 Bake houses.
These have all been periodically examined and reported on from time to time to your board. He has given personal attention to the cleaning out of the various cesspits, and applied the smoke test to many drain traps and drains of which he has had doubts.

Two of the four samples of water sent to me for analysis proved impure for domestic purposes, and the wells were in consequence closed.
A new sewer has been constructed

Summary of Sanitary work continued

at Buckland Brewer to carry off the drainage from some cottages which before drained into the roadway to the annoyance & detriment of their neighbours.
At Parkham a very necessary piece of work has been carried out in constructing a sewer & catch pit for the accomodation of cottages which before poured all their filth into a stream, & this became extremely offensive, and a source of danger to health directly the stream ran at all low.

Overcrowding

Several cases of overcrowding have been dealt with, and in one case it was found necessary to take legal action. — All other means proving futile. In May a magistrate's order was obtained to abate the nuisance from overcrowding, and for a time there was an improvement. In September the same person was again proceeded against for not obeying the order, & a fine of 1/- was imposed.

Vital Statistics

The number of births registered is 187

Males 103. Females 84

Birth rate = 26·3 per 1000.

Vital Statistics, con: Total number of deaths 131
Males 73. Females 58.

Death rate = 18·42 per 1000

Infant mortality There were 28 deaths of infants under 1 year
Death rate = 149·73 per 1000.

The following table shows the variations in the rates for the last three years.

	1899	1898	1897
Birth rate	26·3	23·85	22·38
Death rate	18·42	12·67.	14·33
Infant mortality	149·73	62·85	103·6.

Infant mortality The infant mortality is excessive; the various causes of death being as under:—

Bronchitis & Pneumonia	9.	Debility from birth	9.
Premature birth	2.	Whooping cough	2.
Diarrhoea & enteritis	3.	Convulsions	1.
Congenital dyspnoea	1.	Natural causes (coroner)	1.

Ignorance and carelessness are doubtless largely responsible for the first two causes of death. Many parents think by exposing their children to "harden them", with, in many cases disasterous results to the unfortunate subject of the "hardening experiment". In the matter of feeding, too, there is much ignorance displayed. Milk is regarded by many as of secondary importance, whilst "boiled bread" is apparently considered an ideal food, and

Vital statistics — continued

the offspring has to pay the penalty of his parents want of knowledge.

Analysis of the several districts.

Abbotsham.
Births. Male 11. Female 4. Total 15.
Rate per 1000 = 26·3.
Deaths. Male 3. Female 5. Total 8.
Rate per 1000 = 14·98.

Bradworthy.
Births. Male 5. Female 10. Total 15.
Rate per 1000 = 29·35.
Deaths. Male 5. Female 5. Total 10.
Rate per 1000 = 19·56.

Hartland.
Births. Male 45. Female 49. Total 94.
Rate per 1000 = 24·9.
Deaths. Male 42. Female 26. Total 68.
Rate per 1000 = 20·17.

Sandcross & Littleham.
Births. Male 11. Female 8. Total 19.
Rate per 1000 = 50·13.
Deaths. Male 2. Female 1. Total 3.
Rate per 1000 = 7·91.

Parkham.
Births. Male 31. Female 13. Total 44.
Rate per 1000 = 18·99.
Deaths Male 21. Female 21. Total 42.
Rate per 1000 = 18·14.

Vital statistics — continued

all the districts show a rise in the death rate, except Lauderdale & Littleham, which has the same number of deaths (viz. 3) as last year. The tabulated sheet A shows an analysis of the various causes of death and the various ages.

It will be seen from this report that there has been a steady routine of work done, upon which the health of the district so largely depends, and that several sanitary improvements have been carried out. The most unsatisfactory part of the work occurs with regard to cottage accomodation. Old cottages are neglected and finally abandoned rather than incur the expense of repairs, and new ones are not built to take their places. Building as a speculation is apparently out of the question as with the wages current in the district averaging 12 or 13 shillings a week, the usual rent of £2.10 to £3 a year is as much as can be expected, whilst to build a cottage according to the bye laws in force will take, as far as I can gather, close upon £200 under favourable circumstances, so that the interest will not repay the outlay of capital.
Under these circumstances no one

is likely to build unless it be for the accomodation of his own workmen. It is a question of great, and of growing importance, and is doubtless one of the many causes at work to account for the migration of the rural population to the towns.

I am, Mr. Chairman & Gentlemen,

Yours obediently

Medical Officer of Health,
Bideford Rural District

3.

(A)

TABLE OF DEATHS during the Year 1899, in the Bideford Rural District,

classified according to DISEASES, AGES, and LOCALITIES.

Names of Localities adopted for the purpose of these Statistics; public institutions being shown as separate localities. (See note 4 on back of sheet.) Columns for Population and Births are in Table B. (a)	Mortality from all causes, at subjoined Ages. At all ages. (b)	Under 1 year. (c)	1 and under 5. (d)	5 and under 15. (e)	15 and under 25. (f)	25 and under 65. (g)	65 and upwards. (h)	(i)	1 Smallpox.	2 Scarlatina.	3 Diphtheria.	4 Membranous Croup.	5 Fevers. Typhus.	6 Enteric or Typhoid.	7 Continued	8 Relapsing	9 Puerperal.	10 Cholera.	11 Erysipelas.	12 Measles.	13 Whooping Cough.	14 Diarrhœa and Dysentery	15 Rheumatic Fever.	16 Phthisis.	17 Bronchitis, Pneumonia and Pleurisy.	18 Heart Disease.	19 Cancer*	20 Injuries.	21 All Other Diseases.	22 Total.
Abbotsham Dist.	8	1			1	2	4	Under 5																	1					1
								5 upwds.		1															4				2	7
								Under 5																						
								5 upwds.																						
Bradworthy Dist.	10	5					5	Under 5																	1				4	5
								5 upwds.														1				1	2		1	5
								Under 5																						
								5 upwds.																						
Hartland Dist.	68	13	5	1	3	12	34	Under 5													2	2			3			1	10	18
								5 upwds.																3	7	7	5	3	25	50
								Under 5																						
								5 upwds.																						
Landcross & Littleham	3	2		1				Under 5																	1				1	2
								5 upwds.																					1	1
								Under 5																						
								5 upwds.																						
Parkham Dist.	42	7	6			14	15	Under 5													3				7				2	12
								5 upwds.									1						1	1	6	3	2		16	30
								Under 5																						
								5 upwds.																						
Totals	131	28	11	2	4	28	58	Under 5													5	2			13			1	17	38
								5 upwds.		1							1					1	1	4	17	11	9	3	45	93

The subjoined numbers have also to be taken into account in judging of the above records of mortality. *See Note 5 on back.*

Deaths occurring outside the district among persons belonging thereto.								Under 5																						
								5 upwds.																						
Deaths occurring within the district among persons not belonging thereto.	1						1	Under 5																						
								5 upwds.																					1	1

* The heading of column 19 is left blank for the insertion of Influenza, or any other disease which it may be thought desirable to record.

NOTES ON TABLES A AND B.

NOTE 1. *Medical Officers of Health of "Combined Districts" must make a separate Return for the District of each District Council.*

2. *Medical Officers of Health acting for a portion only of the District of a District Council should write, in the heading of the Table, the designation of the Division for which they act.*

3. *The words "Urban," "Rural," or "Metropolitan" must be inserted in the appropriate space in the heading, according as the District is Urban or Rural, or is within the Metropolitan Area.*

4. The "*Localities*" adopted for the purpose of these statistics should be areas of known population; such as parishes, groups of parishes, townships or wards.

As stated at the head of the first column in each Table, *Public Institutions* should be regarded as separate localities, and the deaths in them should be separately recorded. Workhouses, Hospitals, Infirmaries, Asylums, and other establishments into which numbers of people, and especially of sick people, are received are Public Institutions for the purpose of these statistics.

5. *The deaths which have to be classified in this Table* (A), and summed up in the horizontal line of "Totals," are the whole of those *registered* as having actually occurred in the several localities comprised within the Division or District. But the registered number of deaths frequently requires correction before it can give an exact view of the mortality of a Division or District; and the two lowest horizontal lines are provided for the purpose of enabling Medical Officers of Health to indicate, to the best of their ability, what the extent of such corrections should be. Details concerning the corrective figures, *e.g.*, the institutions that have been considered, or the particular localities to which corrections apply, may appear in the text of the report or in supplementary tables.

Area and Population of the District or Division to which this Return relates.

Area in Acres 5192b.

Population (Last Census) 7036

" (Estimated to middle of 1899) 7109

Death Rates.
- General 18·42 — per 1,000 Population, estimated to middle of 1899.
- Infant (under one year of age) 149·73 — per 1,000 Births Registered.

In recording the facts under the various headings of Tables A and B, attention has been given to the notes endorsed on the Tables.

J H Hobling *Medical Officer of Health.*

(Date) Oct. 1 , 1900.

W B & L (555v)—1254E—10000-10-99

(B)

TABLE OF POPULATION, BIRTHS, AND OF NEW CASES OF INFECTIOUS SICKNESS, *coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health, during the year* 1899, *in the* Bideford Rural *District; classified according to* DISEASES, AGES *and* LOCALITIES.

Names of Localities adopted for the purpose of these Statistics; Public Institutions being shown as separate localities. (See Note 2 on back of sheet.) (a.)	Population at all Ages. Last Census. (b.)	Population at all Ages. Estimated to middle of 1899. (c.)	Registered Births. (d.)	Aged under 5 or over 5. (e.)	New Cases of Sickness in each Locality, coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health. 1 Smallpox.	2 Scarlatina.	3 Diphtheria.	4 Membranous Croup.	Fevers. 5 Typhus.	6 Enteric or Typhoid.	7 Continued.	8 Relapsing	9 Puerperal	10 Cholera.	11 Erysipelas.	12	13
Abbotsham Dist.	528	534	15	Under 5													
				5 upwds.		2	1										
				Under 5													
				5 upwds.													
Bradworthy Dist.	497	511	15	Under 5													
				5 upwds.													
				Under 5													
				5 upwds.													
Hartland Dist.	3333	3369	94	Under 5													
				5 upwds.		2	2						2		8		
				Under 5													
				5 upwds.													
Launceston & Littleham	374	379	19	Under 5													
				5 upwds.													
				Under 5													
				5 upwds.													
Parkham Dist.	2304	2316	44	Under 5													
				5 upwds.		1							1		1		
				Under 5													
				5 upwds.													
				Under 5													
				5 upwds.													
Totals	7036	7109	187	Under 5													
				5 upwds.		5	3						3		9		

Number of such Cases Removed from their Homes in the several Localities for Treatment in Isolation Hospital.	1 Smallpox.	2 Scarlatina.	3 Diphtheria.	4 Membranous Croup.	Fevers. 5 Typhus.	6 Enteric or Typhoid	7 Continued	8 Relapsing	9 Puerperal	10 Cholera.	11 Erysipelas.	12	13
Abbotsham Dist.													
Bradworthy Dist.													
Hartland Dist.													
Launceston & Littleham													
Parkham Dist.													
Totals													

State here whether "Notification of Infectious Disease" is compulsory in the District Yes. Since when? Jan: 1893. Besides the above-mentioned Diseases, insert in the columns with blank headings the names of any other diseases that are notifiable in the District, and fill the columns accordingly. State here the name of the Isolation Hospital used by the sick of the District. Mark (H) the Locality in which such Hospital is situated; or if not within the District, state where it is situated None.

NOTES ON TABLE B.

(See also Notes on back of Table A.)

NOTE 1. The present *Table B.* is concerned with population, births, and sickness (not with mortality) in the district or division to which the Table relates.

2. As stated in the heading of Col. *(a)*, *Public Institutions* should be regarded as separate localities, and the new cases of sickness in them should be separately recorded. Workhouses, Hospitals, Infirmaries, Asylums, and other establishments into which numbers of people, and especially of sick people, are received, are Public Institutions for the purpose of these statistics.

3. *Comments on any unequal incidence of notifiable disease upon the several localities, and considerations as to the local incidence of Consumption and other prevalent diseases, should be made in the text of the Report.*

W B & L (555v)—1255E—10000-10-99